

Waterfowl Hunting Digest 2009–2010



Missouri Department of Conservation

Introduction to Missouri Waterfowl Hunting

Missouri waterfowl hunters now have more days and more places to hunt than ever. Hunters can hunt eight months out of the year beginning with teal season in September and ending with the conclusion of the light goose Conservation Order in April.

Extensive wetland restoration has provided more places to hunt. In the last 15 years, federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, and concerned citizens have restored 25,000 acres of public wetlands and over 100,000 acres of private wetlands—a small portion of the 87 percent of wetlands lost in Missouri. Today's hunters now have the opportunity to hunt such varied habitats as shallow-flooded wetlands, flooded crop fields, flooded timber, dry crop fields, streams, rivers, ponds and reservoirs.

2009–2010 Waterfowl Hunting Outlook

Hunters will be provided with a 60-day duck season for the 13th consecutive year and have ample goose hunting opportunity with a 79-day Canada goose season and light goose hunting that begins on Oct. 31 and ends with the close of the light goose Conservation Order on April 30.

Expectations for the 2009-2010 waterfowl season in Missouri will undoubtedly be high. Increased numbers of breeding ducks and above average production of young have set the stage for a potentially good duck season. How much this potential is realized in Missouri depends upon weather and local habitat conditions. Missouri's habitat appears favorable in most areas. Spring crop planting was delayed in some regions, but yields are not expected to be significantly affected. Production of wetland plant foods also appears to be average to above average in most regions.

Hunter success often differs from expectations based on pre-season reports. Missouri hunters have had some of their best hunting when early expectations were low and poor hunting when expectations were high. Timely migrations and favorable weather patterns, combined with season dates that bracket both early and late hunting preferences, should provide hunters with a variety of opportunities during this waterfowl season.

Adaptive Harvest Management

Duck seasons, based on regulatory alternatives developed under the federal Adaptive Harvest Management Program, provide for a 60-day season with a six-duck daily bag limit in 2009–10 for the 13th consecutive year. Each year's regulation recommendation is based on the status of the mallard breeding population and the condition of prairie ponds in Canada. A three-tiered package of open seasons includes liberal (60 days), moderate (45 days) and restrictive (30 days) options. For more information, go to:

www.flyways.us/regulations-and-harvest/adaptive-harvest-management



CLIFF WHITE

Status of Habitat on the Breeding Grounds

After a dry year on the breeding grounds in 2008, abundant precipitation refilled wetland basins. In spring 2009, the number of wetlands with water increased 45 percent from 2008. Much of this improvement occurred in the north-central United States, especially the Dakotas, where the number of wetland basins with water increased 108 percent from 2008 to levels 87 percent above the long-term average. In contrast, the number of wetland basins with water in prairie Canada increased only 17 percent to levels similar to the long-term average. Improved breeding ground conditions set the stage for good duck production in 2009.

Duck Status

We expected the dry conditions of 2008 to result in poor production and potentially lower numbers of ducks going into 2009. Fortunately, this was not the case. The total breeding duck population increased by 13 percent from 37.3 million in 2008 to 42 million in 2009 and is now 25 percent above the long-term average. The mallard population increased by 10 percent from last spring and is now 13 percent above the long-term average. Blue-winged teal, green-winged teal, northern shovelers, gadwall and redheads appear to be doing the best with shovelers 92 percent, green-winged teal 79 percent, gadwall 73 percent, blue-winged teal 60 percent, and redheads 62 percent above their long-term averages. Although northern pintails increased by 23 percent from last year, their population is still 20 percent below the long-term average. Scaup status is also a concern. Their population remains 18 percent below the long-term average.

Goose Status

Canada goose harvest in Missouri primarily consists of giant Canada geese that nest in Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota and Manitoba and the Eastern Prairie Population (EPP) Canada geese that nest along the west coast of Hudson Bay in northern Manitoba.

After several years of rapid expansion, giant Canada goose populations in Missouri and the Mississippi Flyway have stabilized. The 2009 Mississippi Flyway estimate of 1.9 million giant Canada geese is similar to the estimate of 1.7 million in 2008. In Missouri, the 2009 estimate of 52,400 was similar to the previous eight years.

The Eastern Prairie Population of Canada geese faced one of the latest nesting seasons in the last 40 years. Snow and ice covered the nesting grounds until late June. While the estimate of 161,100 geese represented by singles and pairs was similar to last year's estimate of 153,400, spring arrived too late for most of these geese to successfully produce young. With fewer young in the fall flight, hunting Eastern Prairie Population Canada geese might be more difficult.

The fall flight of white-fronted geese and light geese (snow, blue and Ross's geese) is expected to be similar to the last few years. After the light goose population peaked at 3 million in 1998, it appears to have stabilized at approximately 2 million. The fall 2008 white-fronted goose population estimate of 751,700 is similar to 2007.

Liberal Canada Goose Season

Put to the Test

The last time the Eastern Prairie Canada goose population experienced a bust in production was 2004. That year, goose hunters were restricted to a 1-goose daily bag limit and had only 40 days to hunt Canada geese in December and January, the period when migrant Canada geese normally arrive in Missouri.

This year, however, under the current federal framework, no changes are warranted. Hunters will have 62 days of Canada goose hunting in December and January along with a 2-bird bag limit during the regular Canada goose season. The early Canada goose season, which has a 3-bird bag limit and runs from September 26 to October 7, targets giant Canada geese.

The more liberal Canada goose harvest began in 2006 when state and federal agencies responsible for Eastern Prairie Population Canada geese made the change to help Minnesota and Manitoba better manage their high numbers of giant Canada geese. However, if geese numbers in the Eastern Prairie Population decline too dramatically over the next few years, Missouri and other states may return to more restrictive regulations.



Jim Rather

New Bag Limits in 2009–2010

The canvasback season is open for the full 60-day season with a 1-bird daily bag limit. Compared to most duck species, the canvasback population is small with an average size of approximately 500,000. As a result, regulations tend to err on the conservative side. However, the spring 2009 population estimate of 662,000 was large enough to reopen the season for a full 60 days with a 1-bird daily bag limit.

Scaup daily bag limit is increased from 1 to 2. Although relatively stable the last few years, the scaup population has declined 18 percent from the long-term average. While this decline is not attributed to harvest, the current population can no longer sustain the harvest rates it once did according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. However, modest increases in this year's spring estimate of 4.2 million are large enough to support a 2-bird bag limit.

Rationale for Duck Season Timing

Based on hunters' desires for later seasons, Missouri moved the opening date back about a week in each zone beginning in 2004. Since then the duck season has opened on the last Saturday in October in the North Zone, the first Saturday in November in the Middle Zone, and on Thanksgiving Day or the Friday after in the South Zone. This season structure provides a potential range of opening dates from Oct. 25 through Oct. 31 in the North Zone; from Nov. 1 through Nov. 7 in the Middle Zone; and in the South Zone, Thanksgiving falls from Nov. 22 through Nov. 28. Maintaining opening dates associated with specific weeks of the month allows the timing of duck season to vary by seven days within a six-year period and accommodates those with earlier or later preferences over this time period. According to this framework the season was as early as possible in 2008 and will be as late as possible in 2009 in the North and Middle zones.

Ducks and Coots

Shooting Hours: 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

Season Dates: See table on back cover.

Limits:

Coots 15 daily and 30 in possession

Ducks: The **daily bag limit** of ducks is 6 and may include no more than:

Mallards	.....	4, but no more than 2 females
Wood ducks	.....	3
Hooded mergansers	.....	2
Redheads	.....	2
Scaup (new limit)	.....	2
Black duck	.....	1
Canvasback (new limit)	.....	1
Mottled ducks (new limit)	.....	1
Pintail	.....	1

The **possession limit** of ducks is 12 (twice the daily bag limit; varies by species.)

Geese

Shooting Hours: 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

Season Dates: See table on the back cover.

Limits:

The **daily bag limits** of geese are:

Snow, blue and Ross's (all species combined)	.....	20
White-fronted	.....	2
Brant	.....	1
Canada:		
Sept. 26–Oct. 7	.....	3
Nov. 26–Jan. 31	.....	2

The **possession limits** of geese are twice the daily bag limits, except there is no possession limit for snow, blue and Ross's geese.

REPORT YOUR BANDS: www.reportband.gov

Bands recovered and reported by hunters provide important information about survival, migration, harvest rates and distributions for a wide variety of migratory game birds.

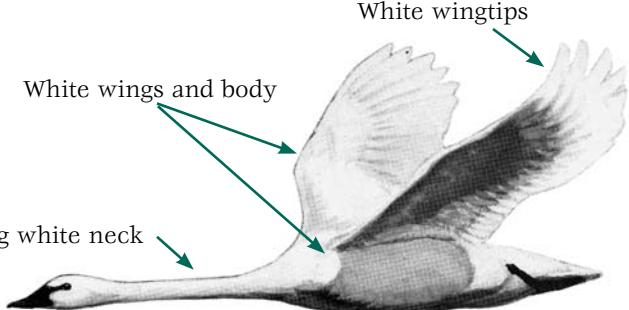
To report band numbers from all types of birds (except pigeons), go online at www.reportband.gov or call 1-800-327-BAND (2263). You will receive a certificate of appreciation and information about the bird. The band is yours to keep.

**All swans are protected by federal and state law
and may not be shot.**

Identify waterfowl before you shoot!

Trumpeter swans are twice the size of Canada geese and four times the size of snow geese.

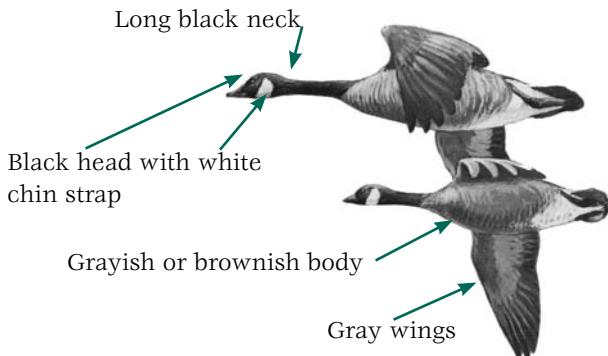
4 feet in length
7-foot wingspan
20-30 pounds



Note: Young swans are gray.

Canada geese are half the size of swans.

2 feet in length
5-foot wingspan
10-12 pounds



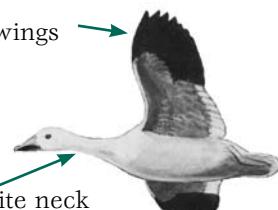
Snow geese are 1/4 the size of swans.

1.5 feet in length
3.5-foot wingspan
5-6 pounds

Note: Young snow geese are gray.

Black tips on white wings

Short white neck



**Report violations to Operation Game Thief
1-800-392-1111**

Illustrations from "Ducks at a Distance: A Waterfowl Identification Guide."
Used with permission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days

In 2009, there are two youth-only waterfowl hunting days in each zone for ducks, geese and coots. Youth hunters must be:

- age 15 or younger
- accompanied by an adult 18 years old or older who is not allowed to hunt ducks but who can participate in other open seasons.

No permits are required for youth hunters. If the youth possesses a valid hunter education certificate card, the accompanying adult does not need a permit or hunter-ed certification. However, if the youth is not hunter-ed certified, the accompanying adult must be hunter-ed certified unless they were born before Jan. 1, 1967, and possess a Missouri permit to hunt small game or be exempt.

Shooting Hours: 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

Season Dates: *North Zone:* Oct. 24–25

Middle Zone: Oct. 31–Nov. 1

South Zone: Nov. 21–22

Limits: The daily bag limit for ducks is the same as during the regular waterfowl season. The daily bag limit for geese is 1 brant, 2 Canada geese, 2 white-fronted geese and 20 light geese. Possession limits are twice the daily bag limit (varies by species), except there is no possession limit for light geese.

Falconry Season for Ducks and Coots

Season Dates and Hunting Hours:

- Sept. 12–27 statewide with hunting hours from sunrise to sunset
- during youth and regular duck seasons (see back cover for zones and dates) with hunting hours 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset
- Feb. 10–March 10 statewide with hunting hours 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

Limits: The **daily bag limit** and **possession limit** shall not exceed 3 and 6 birds, respectively, singly, or in the aggregate during the regular duck seasons (including teal and youth seasons) and extended falconry seasons.

WATERFOWL STATUS ONLINE

For hunting reports that are updated twice a week, results of waterfowl counts conducted every other week and a wealth of other information about waterfowl hunting in Missouri, go to: www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/wtrfowl.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in collaboration with flyway and state waterfowl managers offers a website containing information about waterfowl status, monitoring, harvest and regulations. Go to www.flyways.us.

Light Goose Conservation Order: Feb. 1–April 30

A light goose Conservation Order will be in effect for the 12th consecutive year during spring 2010. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service implemented this Conservation Order to reduce numbers of snow (including their blue color phase) and Ross's geese because they have rapidly increased in number and are causing damage to portions of the fragile arctic tundra. The Conservation Order will be in effect from Feb. 1–April 30 with no bag limit. Hunters may use electronic calls and unplugged shotguns and shoot from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset. **See permit requirement on page 19.**

Managed Waterfowl Hunting in Missouri

The Conservation Department provides managed waterfowl hunting on 15 conservation areas, which are listed on the following pages. These intensively managed areas provide waterfowl with much needed resources during spring and fall migrations. The Department limits the number of parties on these areas to give hunters an opportunity for a quality hunt. Resident hunters can hunt these areas by applying for a reservation each year beginning in early September. **Note: Residents and nonresidents who do not have a reservation may attend a morning drawing or hunt with residents who have a reservation.**

Some of the managed waterfowl areas have permanent blinds, and others provide opportunity for hunters to wade in or hunt from layout boats or boat blinds. Most have disabled-accessible blinds. Additional information about Missouri's managed waterfowl hunting can be found at www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/wtrfowl.

Draw System Favors Larger Parties

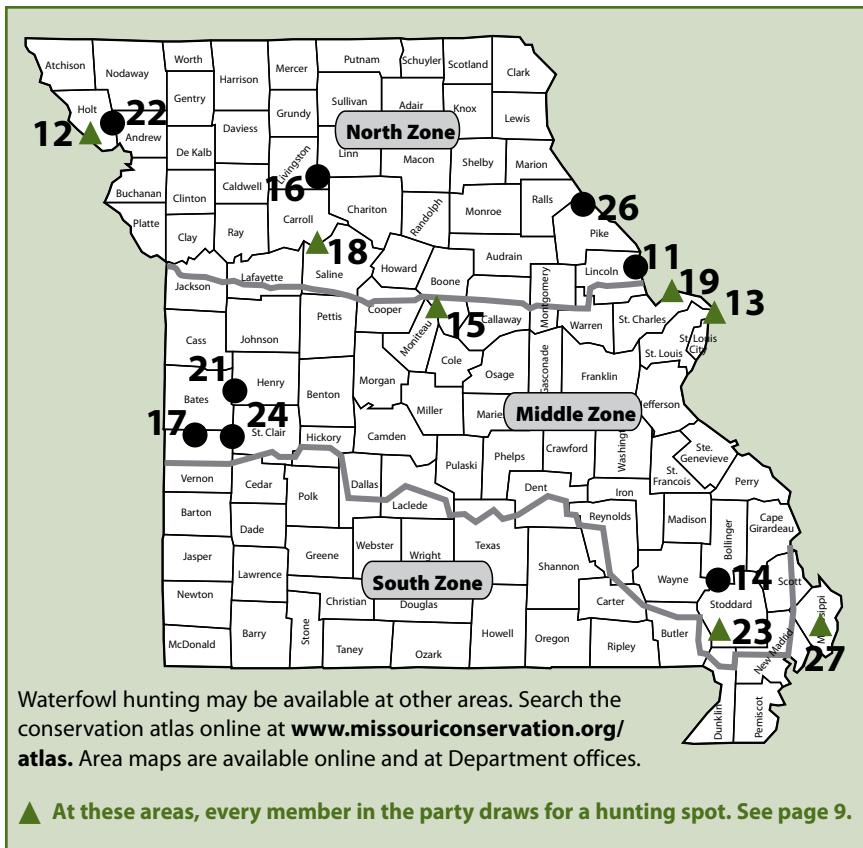
Seven managed wetland areas employ the "every member draws" (EMD) procedure to allocate unreserved hunting opportunity.

EMD allows each member of a hunting party (maximum party size of four) to draw a numbered pill and then use the lowest number to determine the group's place in line for selecting a hunt location. The system provides larger parties a greater chance of drawing a more favorable position, and resulted in an additional 3,400 hunter trips—a 30 percent increase from previous years—without impacting individual or party duck harvest, daily hunter satisfaction or hunt safety. The EMD procedure does not change the way reservation holders draw for positions.

Conservation areas using EMD are Bob Brown, Columbia Bottom, Eagle Bluffs, Grand Pass, Marais Temps Clair, Otter Slough and Ten Mile Pond. The remaining managed wetland areas turn fewer people away and, therefore, would not benefit from EMD.

Managed Waterfowl Hunting Areas

If you do not have a reservation for the following conservation areas, you must participate in the daily drawing or hunt with residents who have a reservation. For details, call the phone numbers noted after the area names or go to www.mdc.mo.gov/18556.



Zone Boundaries

North Zone: That portion of Missouri north of a line running west from the Illinois border at Lock and Dam 25; west on Lincoln County Hwy. N to Mo. Hwy. 79; south on Mo. Hwy. 79 to Mo. Hwy. 47; west on Mo. Hwy. 47 to I-70; west on I-70 to the Kansas border.

Middle Zone: The remainder of Missouri not included in other zones.

South Zone: That portion of Missouri south of a line running west from the Illinois border on Mo. Hwy. 34 to I-55; south on I-55 to U.S. Hwy. 62; west on U.S. Hwy. 62 to Mo. Hwy. 53; north on Mo. Hwy. 53 to Mo. Hwy. 51; north on Mo. Hwy. 51 to U.S. Hwy. 60; west on U.S. Hwy. 60 to Mo. Hwy. 21; north on Mo. Hwy. 21 to Mo. Hwy. 72; west on Mo. Hwy. 72 to Mo. Hwy. 32; west on Mo. Hwy. 32 to U.S. Hwy. 65; north on U.S. Hwy. 65 to U.S. Hwy. 54; west on U.S. Hwy. 54 to the Kansas border.

- 11 B. K. Leach CA** (4,307 acres; Lincoln County) 573-898-5905. Walk-in hunting; water blinds; 1 ADA blind (636-441-4554); boats provided where needed; 1 p.m. closure. Drawing held at River Slough Tract.
- 12 Bob Brown CA** ▲ (3,302 acres; Holt County) 660-646-6122. Walk-in hunting; temporary blinds only; 1 ADA blind (816-271-3100); boat ramp; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure.
- 13 Columbia Bottom CA** ▲ (4,318 acres; St. Louis County) 314-877-6014. Walk-in hunting; temporary blinds only; 1 ADA blind; boat ramps at most pools; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure.
- 14 Duck Creek CA** (7,482 acres; Bolinger, Stoddard, Wayne counties) 573-222-3337. Walk-in hunting; goose pits; field hunting for geese; water blinds; 1 ADA blind; boats provided for some blinds; boat ramp; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure in designated areas. **Note:** Renovations may restrict flooded timber hunting; Pool 8, part of Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, usually gets water late in the season.
- 15 Eagle Bluffs CA** ▲ (4,440 acres; Boone County) 573-445-3882. Walk-in hunting; temporary blinds only; 2 ADA blinds; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure in designated areas.
- 16 Fountain Grove CA** (7,154 acres; Linn and Livingston counties) 660-646-6122. Walk-in hunting; water blinds; 1 ADA blind; boats provided for blinds only; boat ramps; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure in designated areas. Note: Hunting in pools H and J will be dependent upon progress of wetland renovation.
- 17 Four Rivers CA** (13,929 acres; Vernon and Bates counties) 417-395-2341. Units 1 and 2 have 8 shooting pools. Walk-in hunting; field hunting for geese; temporary blinds only; 1 ADA blind; boat ramps; camping; permits and stamps; open all day.
- 18 Grand Pass CA** ▲ (5,096 acres; Saline County) 660-646-6122. Walk-in hunting; temporary blinds only; 1 ADA blind; boat ramps at most pools; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure.
- 19 Marais Temps Clair CA** ▲ (918 acres; St. Charles County) 314-877-6014. Open to waterfowl hunting Friday-Monday only. Walk-in hunting; 1 ADA blind; 1 p.m. closure.
- 21 Montrose CA** (3,979 acres; Henry County) 660-693-4666. Water blinds; 1 ADA blind; boat ramp; camping; permits and stamps; open all day.
- 22 Nodaway Valley CA** (3,833 acres; Holt and Andrew counties) 660-646-6122. Walk-in hunting; water blinds; 1 ADA blind (816-271-3100); temporary blinds only; boat ramp; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure in designated areas.
- 23 Otter Slough CA** ▲ (4,866 acres; Stoddard County) 573-624-5821. Walk-in hunting; field hunting for geese; water blinds; temporary blinds only; 1 ADA blind; boats provided for blinds only; boat ramps; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure.
- 24 Schell-Osage CA** (8,633 acres; Vernon and St. Clair counties) 417-432-3414. Walk-in hunting; water blinds; 2 ADA blinds; boat ramp; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure in designated areas.
- 26 Ted Shanks CA** (6,705 acres; Pike County) 573-248-2530. Walk-in hunting; water blinds; 1 ADA blind; boats provided; boat ramp; camping; permits and stamps; 1 p.m. closure in designated areas.
- 27 Ten Mile Pond CA** ▲ (3,755 acres; Mississippi County) 573-649-2770. Walk-in hunting; field hunting for geese; temporary blinds only; boat ramp; permits and stamps; open all day.

Duck Identification Tips

Species restrictions in the daily bag require hunters to identify their target before shooting. Hunters should have in mind what species are expected to be present during the particular time of year, time of day and in the habitat they are hunting. Once ducks are spotted, the flight characteristics of the flock will help. Small, compact, fast-flying flocks are more likely to be teal or shoveler, as compared to mallards, pintails or wigeon that are more likely to be seen in loose flocks. Divers tend to have a faster wing beat than dabblers, and canvasbacks tend to shift from wavy lines to V's.

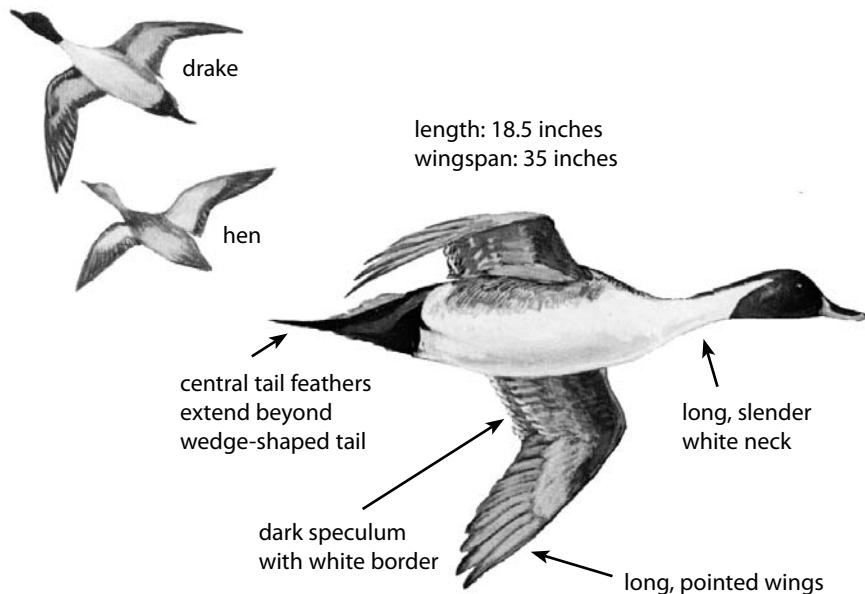
If unsure of the species, the safest bet is to not shoot!

Color and individual silhouettes become more important when ducks are closer. Pintails are long and sleek with pointed wings, tails, and narrow necks. The prominent sloped bill of the canvasback is readily visible within gun range. Look for a white band on the wings to identify scaup.

For additional help in identifying ducks, purchase the Conservation Department's 16-minute video, "The Key to Duck ID," by calling toll-free 877-521-8632 or online at www.mdcnatureshop.com. You can also find tips at: www.flyways.us/ducks-at-a-distance.

Pintail

These slender, graceful and fast fliers often zig-zag from great heights before leveling off to land. They may be seen in flocks with mallards. Drakes whistle. Hens have a coarse quack.



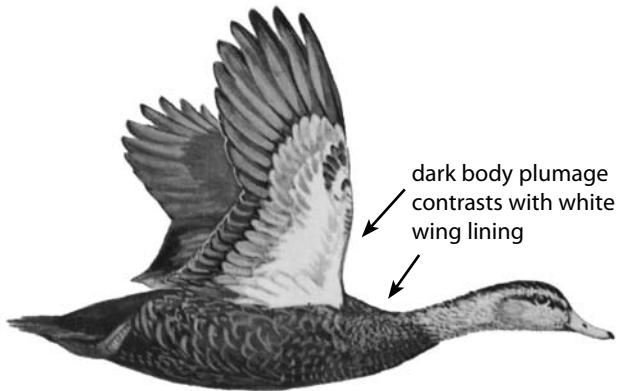
Black Duck —

These shy and wary ducks are swift flyers, usually moving in small flocks. They may be seen with mallards. Black ducks sound similar to mallards.



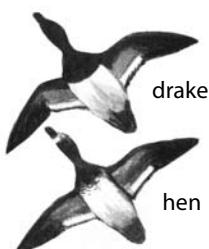
drake and hen
are similar

length: 24 inches

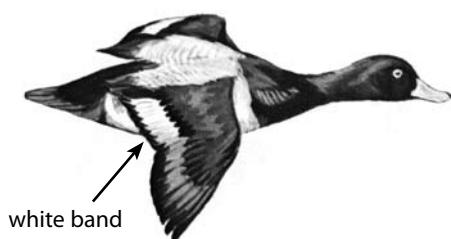


Scaup —

Except for the wing marks, greater and lesser scaup appear nearly identical in the field. The light band near the trailing edges of the wings runs almost to the wing tip in the greater scaup, but only about halfway in the lesser. Scaup also look similar to ring-necked ducks. Flock movements are rapid, often erratic, usually in compact groups. Hens are silent. Lesser scaup drakes *purr*. Greater scaup drakes have a discordant *scaup, scaup*.



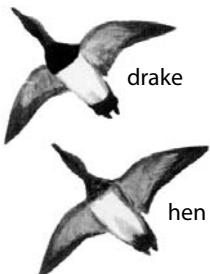
Lesser scaup length: 17 inches



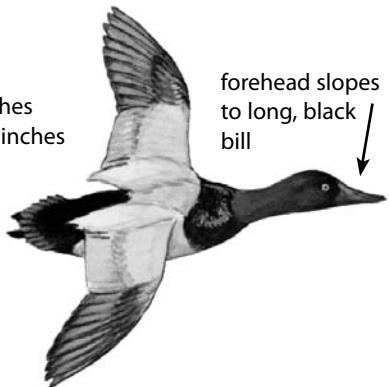
From "Ducks at a Distance: A Waterfowl Identification Guide."
Used with permission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Canvasback —

The swiftest of all ducks, the canvasback has a rapid and noisy wingbeat. In the air, they look large and light colored compared to other divers. Drakes *croak*, *peep* and *growl*. Hens have a mallard-like *quack*.

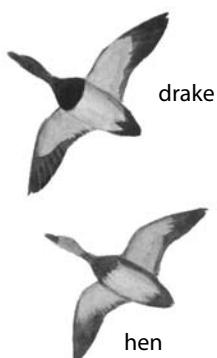


length: 15 inches
wingspan: 34 inches

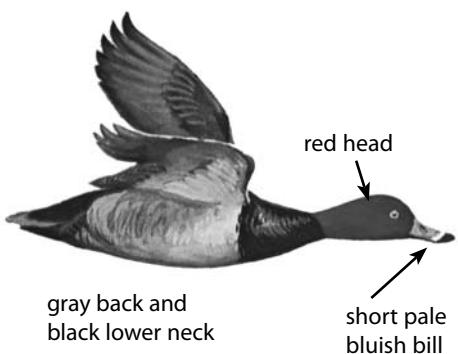


Redhead —

When flying, redheads give the impression of being in a hurry. In the air, they look similar to scaup and ring-necked drakes. They move in irregular formations over feeding areas, and often are found with canvasbacks. Drakes make a *purr* and *meow* sound; hens have a loud *squak*.



length: 20 inches

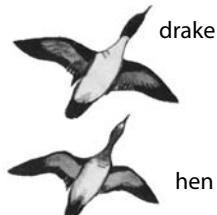


gray back and
black lower neck

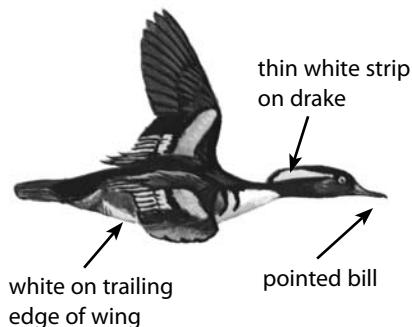
short pale
bluish bill

Hooded Merganser —

The short rapid wing strokes of the hooded merganser give the impression of great speed. Mergansers are often seen in pairs or very small flocks. It is unusual to hear them call in the fall.



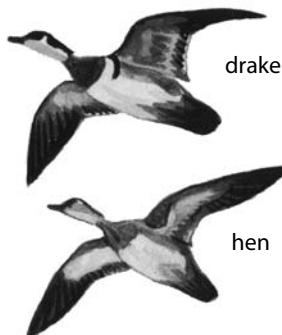
length: 18 inches



Wood Duck —

The flight of wood ducks is swift and direct. While flying, their wings make a rustling, swishing sound. Drakes call *hoo-w-ett*, often in flight; hens have a *cr-r-ek* when frightened.

length: 18.5 inches



From "Ducks at a Distance: A Waterfowl Identification Guide."
Used with permission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

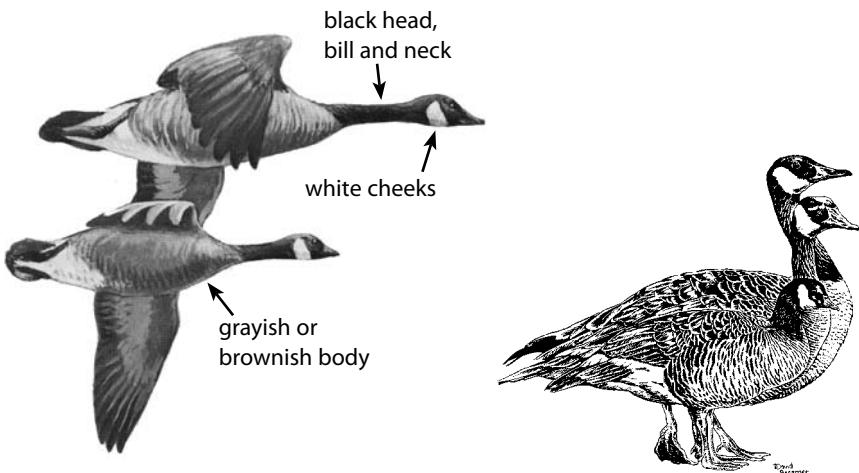
Goose Identification Tips

Because of the different bag limits, hunters must be able to identify the different goose species during flight. Watch for differences in coloration and voice. Be sure of the species before you shoot.

For additional help in identifying geese, go to www.flyways.us/ducks-at-a-distance.

Canada Geese

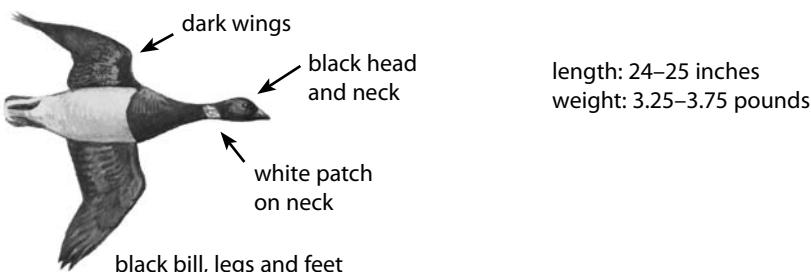
Canada geese are often called "honkers" because of their distinctive *honk*. All races have similar habits and voices.



vary in weight from 3 to more than 12 pounds, depending on race

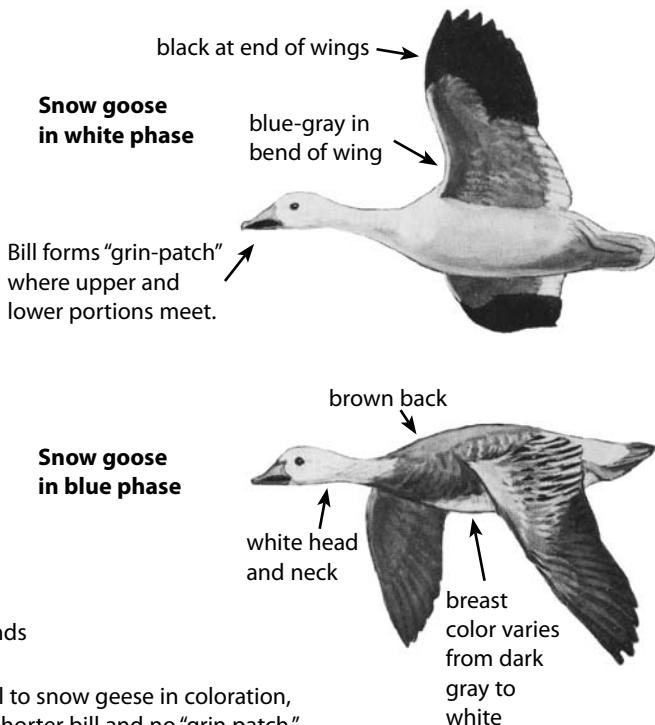
Brant

Brants fly swiftly and in irregular and ever-changing flocks. These birds are rarely seen in Missouri.



Snow Geese

Snow geese have two color phases: white and blue. Immature appear gray and can be confused with immature white-fronted geese. Their call is a high-pitched, honk.



White-fronted Geese

White-fronted geese fly in V-shaped flocks. Their call is a laugh-like series of high-pitched paired notes.

length: 29 inches
weight 6.25 pounds

upperparts are brown

base of bill is white
white underparts with dark patches on adults

From "Ducks at a Distance: A Waterfowl Identification Guide."
Used with permission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Permit and Stamp Requirements

To pursue, take, possess and transport ducks, coots and geese in Missouri, except during the Conservation Order, all hunters age 16 and older, unless exempt, must have in their possession three permits as listed below.

Persons born on or after Jan. 1, 1967, must have completed an approved hunter education program in Missouri or elsewhere and display a Hunter Education Certificate Card before buying any firearms hunting permit, unless the hunter has first purchased an Apprentice Hunter Authorization. A hunter-ed card need not be displayed if certification can be verified at the vendor's computer terminal.

- 1.** Missouri residents age 16 through 64, unless exempt, and nonresidents age 16 and older, must have one of the following small game hunting permits:

- ▶ Missouri Resident Small Game Hunting Permit. \$10
- ▶ Missouri Resident Hunting & Fishing Permit \$19
- ▶ Missouri Daily Small Game Hunting Permit (per day) \$11
- ▶ Missouri Nonresident Small Game Hunting Permit. \$80
- ▶ Missouri Resident National Guard and Reserve Service Small Game Hunting and Fishing Permit (special requirements apply) \$5
- ▶ Missouri Resident Lifetime Small Game Hunting Permit *varies by age*
- ▶ Missouri Resident Lifetime Conservation Partner Permit *varies by age*

Exemption: Missouri resident landowners on their own land do not need any of the above.

- 2.** In addition to one of the above, residents and nonresidents age 16 and older must have a:

- ▶ Missouri Migratory Bird Hunting Permit \$6

Note: Purchase of this permit satisfies requirements for Migratory Game Bird Harvest Registration.

- 3.** In addition to the permits listed above, all hunters age 16 and older must have a:

- ▶ Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. \$15

Note: This federal "duck" stamp must be signed in ink across the face.

Permit requirements for hunters aged 15 and under

- ▶ Resident and nonresident hunters age 15 and under are not required to purchase any permits to hunt ducks, coots or geese in Missouri. However, they must have in their possession a valid Hunter Education Certificate Card while hunting or be in the immediate presence of an adult age 18 or older who possesses a Missouri small game hunting permit and is hunter education certified or born before Jan. 1, 1967.

New Permit Requirement for Conservation Order

During the Conservation Order, Feb. 1–April 30, residents and nonresidents age 16 and older only need a Conservation Order Permit. This permit costs \$5 for residents and \$40 for nonresidents. Hunters with either a Resident Lifetime Conservation Partner Permit or a Resident Lifetime Small Game Hunting Permit do not need to purchase a Conservation Order Permit to hunt light geese during the Conservation Order.

Hunters 15 years old and younger do not need a Conservation Order Permit, but must possess a valid hunter education certificate card or hunt in the immediate presence of a properly licensed adult 18 years old or older who is hunter education certified or was born before January 1, 1967.

Note: A Missouri small game hunting permit, Missouri Migratory Bird Hunting Permit and federal duck stamp are not required during the Conservation Order.

Mentoring Option for Apprentice Hunters

Would you like to share those beautiful fall and winter days waterfowl hunting with a good friend or a spouse who has never hunted before? You know they would love it, but you can't get them to invest the time to take the hunter-education course.

To help introduce adults to hunting, the Conservation Department now allows hunters age 16 and older who are not hunter-ed certified to hunt with firearms, as long as they:

- ▶ first purchase the new Apprentice Hunter Authorization for \$10
- ▶ then purchase the required permits and stamps for the season they want to hunt (see next page)
- ▶ hunt in the immediate presence of a properly licensed hunter 18 years old or older who is hunter-ed certified or was born before Jan. 1, 1967.

Note: The Apprentice Hunter Authorization allows the holder to purchase firearms permits throughout the permit year, and it can be purchased for two permit years. After the second year, the apprentice hunter will be required to become hunter-ed certified if he or she wants to continue hunting.

Missouri is a leader in hunter recruitment, and the Apprentice Hunter Authorization is just one more tool to help you share your hunting knowledge and tradition with your friends and family. If your apprentice hunter wants to continue waterfowl hunting after two seasons, it's never been easier to get hunter-ed certified with a new online course, available at www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/huntered/online.

As a mentor, you may also want to visit the online hunter-ed website as a review before you take your apprentice hunting. A fee of \$15 is charged if and when the online test is processed.

Where to Purchase Permits

Purchase a Missouri small game hunting permit and the Missouri *Migratory Bird Hunting Permit*:

- ▶ over the counter from any permit vendor
- ▶ by telephone anytime at (800) 392-4115*
- ▶ online anytime at

www.wildlifelicense.com/mo*

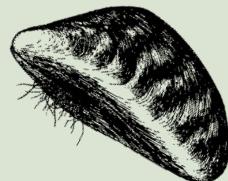
*Credit card and \$2 per person
surcharge required.



Purchase the federal *Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp* (duck stamp) at U.S. Post Offices and selected permit vendors.

Help stop zebra mussels

Zebra mussels have been found in Lake Taneycomo, Bull Shoals Lake, Lake of the Ozarks, the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, and in the Meramec River near St. Louis. Although less than 2 inches long, these exotics:



- **CLOG** the cooling systems of boat motors causing them to overheat
- **PLUG** intake pipes, cutting off water supplies to cities and power plants
- **RUIN** beaches with their sharp shells and rotting carcasses
- **SPREAD** quickly—a single female can produce 1 million eggs a year

To help stop this invasive mussel: Inspect, Drain, Rinse, Dry!

- **INSPECT** your boat for mussels after each use, remove and trash mussels and water weeds before leaving any body of water.
- **DRAIN** all water from and disinfect your boat, bait buckets and equipment before leaving any body of water.
- **RINSE** in hot water your boat's hull, drive unit, livewell and pump, bilge, trailer, bait bucket, engine cooling system and all other parts and accessories that get wet.
- **DRY** your boat, motor and trailer thoroughly for 5 days before boating again.

Report sightings to Mussel Biologist, 1110 S. College Ave., Columbia, MO 65201, or call 573/882-9880. Save several mussel shells for identification by placing them in rubbing alcohol or by freezing them.

Federal Regulations Summary

In addition to state regulations, the following federal rules apply to the taking, possession, transportation, shipment and storage of waterfowl and other migratory birds. **Note:** This is only a summary; refer to Title 50, Part 20 of the Code of Federal Regulations at www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/.

RESTRICTIONS: No person shall take waterfowl:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance.
- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler that is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun except during the light goose Conservation Order.
- From a sink box, a low-floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water.
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance. Paraplegic means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord.
- From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- Using records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls except during the light goose Conservation Order.
- By driving, rallying, or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sailboat to put them in the range of the hunters.
- By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is or was baited to be in violation. Agricultural areas must be prepared in accordance with official recommendations to be legally hunted. It is a separate offense to place bait on or adjacent to an area that causes, induces or allows another to hunt by the aid of bait or over a baited area.

- While possessing shot (either in shotshells or as loose shot for muzzle-loading) other than steel shot or such shot approved as nontoxic by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. **See next page.**

CLOSED SEASON: No person shall take migratory game birds during the closed season.

SHOOTING OR HAWKING HOURS: No person shall take migratory game birds except during the hours open to shooting and hawking as prescribed.

DAILY BAG LIMIT: No person shall take in any one day more than one daily bag limit.

FIELD POSSESSION LIMIT: No person shall possess more than one daily bag limit while in the field or while returning from the field to one's car, hunting camp, motel, etc.

WANTON WASTE: All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.

TAGGING: No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

1. The hunter's signature.
2. The hunter's address.
3. The total number of birds involved, by species.
4. The dates such birds were killed.

No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are properly tagged.

POSSESSION OF LIVE BIRDS: Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

DRESSING: No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird (except doves) and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one full-feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported from the field to one's home or to a commercial preservation facility.

SHIPMENT: No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

IMPORTATION: For information regarding the importation of migratory birds killed in another country, hunters should consult federal regulations 50 CFR 20.61 through 20.66. One fully-feathered wing must remain attached to all migratory game birds being transported between a port of entry and one's home or to a migratory bird preservation facility. No per-

son shall import migratory game birds killed in any foreign country, except Canada, unless such birds are dressed (except as required above), drawn, and the head and feet are removed. No person shall import migratory game birds belonging to another person.

DUAL VIOLATION: Violation of state migratory bird regulations is also a violation of federal regulations.

Shot Requirements

Shells possessed or used while hunting waterfowl or coots statewide, and other species as designated by posting on public areas, must be loaded with material approved as nontoxic by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

As of July 2009, shot types approved as being nontoxic are:

bismuth-tin	97% bismuth, 3% tin
iron (steel)	iron and carbon
iron-tungsten	any proportion of tungsten and ≥1% iron
iron-tungsten-nickel	≥1% iron, any proportion of tungsten, up to 40% nickel
tungsten-bronze	51.1% tungsten, 44.4% copper, 3.9% tin, 0.6% iron or 60% tungsten, 35.1% copper, 3.9% tin, 1% iron
tungsten-iron-copper-nickel	40–76% tungsten, 10–37% iron, 9–16% copper, 5–7% nickel
tungsten-matrix	95.9% tungsten, 4.1% polymer
tungsten-polymer	95.5% tungsten, 4.5% nylon 6 or 11
tungsten-tin-iron	any proportions of tungsten and tin, ≥1% iron
tungsten-tin-bismuth	any proportions of tungsten, tin and bismuth
tungsten-tin-iron-nickel	65% tungsten, 21.8% tin, 10.4% iron, 2.8% nickel

BE AN ETHICAL HUNTER

- ✓ **Respect Other Hunters**—Your enjoyment, and theirs, will result from mutual courtesy in the marsh.
- ✓ **Respect the Rules**—Know all state and federal regulations.
- ✓ **Respect Biology**—We share responsibility for migratory birds and wetland habitat throughout North America.
- ✓ **Respect the Waterfowl Hunting Tradition**—Setting up too close or downwind of other hunters is neither safe nor ethical.
- ✓ **Respect the Resource**—Use nontoxic shot. Be sure that birds are in range. Identify your target before shooting.

Tips for Shooting Nontoxic Shot

Of the many approved types of nontoxic shot, each has its own characteristics and benefits. Some, such as steel, are harder, pattern tighter and have more pellets in each load than lead shot. Others are more expensive, but have characteristics similar to lead. Regardless of what you choose, learn how it works with your shotgun before heading out to hunt.

Many hunters underestimate distances and shoot birds out of range. Find your effective range with nontoxic shot by practicing shooting at a target 20 yards away. Once you have that down, increase the distance to your target in small increments. This will help you learn to judge distances and how far you can effectively shoot before you go hunting.

To help hunters become more efficient and ethical harvesters of waterfowl and other game using nontoxic ammunition, the Conservation Department offers "Effective Wingshooting, the CONSEP Way." These classes were developed based on peer-reviewed scientific research by the Cooperative North American Shotgunning Education Program (CONSEP). Certified instructors will teach participants how to choose the correct choke, load and shot size for different game, how to estimate shooting distances, and how to effectively lead their target. For information, go to www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/gamebird/wingshooting.htm.

**Be a better
hunter: Know
your effective
target range
before the
season begins!**

Suggested Shot Size Selection for Waterfowl

Waterfowl species	Minimum	Typical hunting conditions	Minimum desired pattern density (hits/30" circle)
Small/medium ducks	6 steel* 6 bismuth 6 tungsten alloy	3–4 steel 4–6 bismuth 4–6 tungsten alloy	120
Large ducks	4 steel 6 bismuth 6 tungsten alloy	2–3 steel 4 bismuth 4–6 tungsten alloy	90
Small geese	2 steel 2 bismuth 4 tungsten alloy	1–BB steel 2 bismuth 2 tungsten alloy	60
Large geese	2 steel 2 bismuth 4 tungsten alloy	BB–BBB steel 1–BB bismuth 2–BB tungsten alloy	50

Close range is less than 35 yards; all shots should be limited to less than 45 yards. Velocity on all loads should be a minimum of 1,225 FPS.

**Note: Small shot (#6) is an excellent choice for finishing wounded waterfowl at close range.*

Avian Influenza Precautions

As part of a national plan, the Conservation Department is helping monitor migratory birds for H5N1 avian influenza. This effort will include sampling hunter-harvested ducks and geese in Missouri. Waterfowl are susceptible to a number of diseases, and Department personnel regularly submit samples to the National Wildlife Health Center for diagnosis. It should be noted that the observation of dead wild birds does not necessarily indicate the arrival of the virus; bird deaths can be caused by a variety of diseases, events or environmental factors. State and federal agencies are taking steps to minimize the potential impact of the occurrence of H5N1 avian influenza should it occur within the United States.

For more information about avian influenza, go to: www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/wtrfowl/birdflu.htm.

Proper Handling of Game Birds

Practice good hygiene when handling or cleaning wild birds. Here are some specific practices recommended by the National Wildlife Health Center:

1. Do not handle or eat birds that are obviously sick or birds found dead. Contact the Conservation Department or another natural resource agency if you find sick or dead birds.
2. Keep your game birds cool, clean and dry.
3. Do not eat, drink or smoke while cleaning or handling birds.
4. Wear rubber or disposable latex gloves while handling and cleaning game. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water (or with an alcohol-based hand product if your hands are not visibly soiled) afterwards.
5. Clean all tools and surfaces immediately after cleaning birds; use hot soapy water, then disinfect with a 10 percent chlorine bleach solution.
6. Cook game meat thoroughly (well done or 160 degrees F).

Put a little nature on your plate

Conservation Heritage license plates let you become a driving force for conservation in Missouri. For a \$25 annual donation to the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, you can order the plate of your choice any time, regardless of your current license plate expiration date. The foundation will direct your donation to a project that protects our natural heritage, such as wildlife habitat improvements on public and private land.



You can pay the donation and pick up a Conservation Heritage License Plate Emblem Use Authorization Form at any permit vendor. For more details, call 1-800-227-1488 or go to www.mochf.org.

Investing in your Conservation Legacy

When hunting from a boat

- ▶ Leave a detailed float plan with family or friends.
- ▶ Check weather forecast. High wind can be dangerous. Cancel trip if water conditions aren't safe.
- ▶ Don't overload the boat.
- ▶ Load gear low in the boat and distribute the weight evenly.
- ▶ Wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket at all times even if you can swim.
- ▶ If wearing chest waders, use a belt to keep them from filling up with water.
- ▶ Stow visual distress signals on board.
- ▶ Carry a throwable flotation device in case someone falls overboard.
- ▶ Transport firearms muzzle first with the action open, unloaded and cased.
- ▶ At the first sign of a storm, head for shore.

If your boat swamps or capsizes

- ▶ Stay with the boat, and use distress signals.
- ▶ To retain body heat, pull your knees to your chest and keep your elbows to your sides.
- ▶ If in chest waders, trap air by bending your knees and raising your feet. Lie back in the water.

Other ways to stay afloat

- ▶ Place an oar under the knees and another behind the back and shoulders.
- ▶ If in hip boots, trap air in the boots by bending your knees. Lie on your stomach.
- ▶ If decoys are in reach, stuff them inside your jacket.

Harvest Survey Needs Your Response

When you purchase your Migratory Bird Hunting Permit, the vendor asks you a series of questions about your migratory bird hunting activities for the previous year. The answers you provide place you in a category with other migratory bird hunters by type and amount of hunting activity. This allows the Conservation Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through the cooperative effort known as the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program, to use harvest surveys to sample hunters from each category.

This survey information is extremely important and is considered when establishing migratory bird hunting seasons each year. Your cooperation in supplying this information is vital. If you receive a survey, please complete and return it even if you did not hunt or were unsuccessful while afield. All the information you provide is important. By completing the survey, you are doing your part to help manage migratory birds.

SUNRISE AND SUNSET AT JEFFERSON CITY

DAY	SEPT. 2009		OCT. 2009		NOV. 2009		DEC. 2009		JAN. 2010	
	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.
1	6:38	7:38	7:05	6:51	6:36	5:08	7:08	4:48	7:26	4:58
2	6:39	7:37	7:06	6:50	6:37	5:07	7:09	4:48	7:27	4:59
3	6:40	7:35	7:07	6:48	6:38	5:06	7:10	4:48	7:27	5:00
4	6:41	7:34	7:08	6:47	6:39	5:05	7:10	4:48	7:27	5:01
5	6:42	7:32	7:08	6:45	6:40	5:04	7:11	4:47	7:27	5:02
6	6:43	7:31	7:09	6:43	6:41	5:03	7:12	4:47	7:27	5:03
7	6:43	7:29	7:10	6:42	6:42	5:02	7:13	4:47	7:27	5:04
8	6:44	7:28	7:11	6:40	6:43	5:01	7:14	4:47	7:27	5:05
9	6:45	7:26	7:12	6:39	6:44	5:00	7:15	4:48	7:26	5:06
10	6:46	7:24	7:13	6:37	6:45	4:59	7:16	4:48	7:26	5:07
11	6:47	7:23	7:14	6:36	6:47	4:59	7:16	4:48	7:26	5:08
12	6:48	7:21	7:15	6:35	6:48	4:58	7:17	4:48	7:26	5:09
13	6:49	7:20	7:16	6:33	6:49	4:57	7:18	4:48	7:26	5:10
14	6:50	7:18	7:17	6:32	6:50	4:56	7:19	4:48	7:25	5:11
15	6:50	7:16	7:18	6:30	6:51	4:55	7:19	4:49	7:25	5:12
16	6:51	7:15	7:19	6:29	6:52	4:55	7:20	4:49	7:25	5:13
17	6:52	7:13	7:20	6:27	6:53	4:54	7:21	4:49	7:24	5:14
18	6:53	7:12	7:21	6:26	6:54	4:53	7:21	4:50	7:24	5:15
19	6:54	7:10	7:22	6:25	6:55	4:53	7:22	4:50	7:23	5:16
20	6:55	7:08	7:23	6:23	6:56	4:52	7:22	4:51	7:23	5:17
21	6:56	7:07	7:24	6:22	6:57	4:52	7:23	4:51	7:22	5:18
22	6:57	7:05	7:25	6:21	6:59	4:51	7:23	4:52	7:22	5:19
23	6:58	7:04	7:26	6:19	7:00	4:51	7:24	4:52	7:21	5:21
24	6:58	7:02	7:27	6:18	7:01	4:50	7:24	4:53	7:20	5:22
25	6:59	7:01	7:28	6:17	7:02	4:50	7:25	4:53	7:20	5:23
26	7:00	6:59	7:29	6:16	7:03	4:49	7:25	4:54	7:19	5:24
27	7:01	6:57	7:30	6:14	7:04	4:49	7:25	4:55	7:18	5:25
28	7:02	6:56	7:31	6:13	7:05	4:49	7:26	4:55	7:18	5:26
29	7:03	6:54	7:32	6:12	7:06	4:48	7:26	4:56	7:17	5:27
30	7:04	6:53	7:34	6:11	7:07	4:48	7:26	4:57	7:16	5:29
31			7:35	6:10			7:26	4:58	7:15	5:30

This table is for Jefferson City and points on the same longitude north and south. For locations east, subtract one minute for each 13.5 miles of airline distance. For locations west, add one minute for each 13.5 miles. Sunrise and sunset from Sept. 1 to Oct. 31 have been converted to daylight-saving time. To calculate the sunrise and sunset times anywhere in the United States, see the U.S. Naval Observatory web site: <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/>

Missouri Department of Conservation

P.O. Box 180

Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180

573/751-4115

www.missouriconservation.org

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, (573) 751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

2009–2010 Waterfowl Seasons

Zone	Youth Hunt	Ducks	Canada Geese and Brant	White-fronted Geese	Light Geese (snow, blue, Ross's)*
North	Oct. 24–25	Oct. 31–Dec. 29	Sept. 26–Oct. 7 <i>and</i> Nov. 26–Jan. 31		
Middle	Oct. 31–Nov. 1	Nov. 7–Jan. 5		Nov. 26–Jan. 31	Oct. 31–Jan. 31
South	Nov. 21–22	Nov. 26–Jan. 24			

*The Conservation Order for light geese will be in effect from **Feb. 1 through April 30, 2010**, with no bag limit. Hunters may use electronic calls and unplugged shotguns, and shoot from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset. **New!** A Conservation Order Permit is the only permit required, unless exempt. See page 9 for details.

Shooting Hours:

1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset

Daily Bag Limits

(see page 6 possession limits)

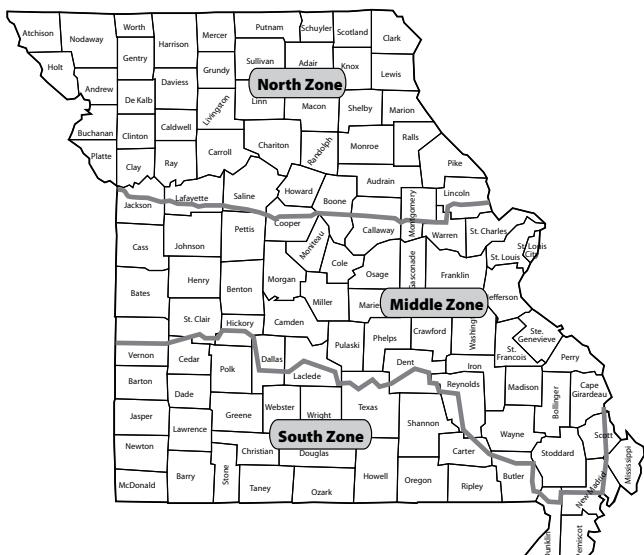
Coot Bag Limit

15 coots daily

Duck Bag Limit

6 ducks daily including:

- No more than 4 mallards (only 2 females)
- No more than 3 wood ducks
- No more than 2 each: hooded mergansers redheads scaup **New!**
- No more than 1 each: black duck canvasback **New!** mottled duck **New!** pintail



Goose Bag Limits

3 Canada geese during the early season

2 Canada geese during the regular season

2 white-fronted geese

20 light geese

1 brant

**For permit information,
see pages 18–20.**